

Judge Weighs Civil Rights Action Against Duxbury Teenagers

Wednesday,

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Plymouth Superior Court Judge Patrick Brady is expected to issue a decision Wednesday on a complaint filed by State Attorney General Tom Reilly's office for a preliminary injunction against three Duxbury teenagers.

Russell Hodgdon, an attorney representing one of the teenagers charged in the incident said Monday he is hopeful that Judge Brady will weigh the facts, including the imposed "stay away" order already in place and deny the Attorney General's request.

Assistant State Attorney Suzanne Glick Gilfix representing the civil rights division sought the injunction in Plymouth Superior Court Monday against the three 15-year old girls who allegedly threw paint balls and rocks at a Jewish teacher's house on Standish Street December 17. The complaint seeks to prevent the girls from inflicting further harm on the victims or others.

The three DHS sophomores sat in court with their families as their respective attorneys represented them.

In a recent press release on the matter Reilly said, "We must guarantee all citizens the right to be safe in their homes regardless of their religion and which holidays they celebrate.

We will be vigilant in using every available resource to protect people from becoming victims of crimes motivated by hateful prejudice. We must continue to teach our young citizens that acts of hate are unacceptable."

Allegedly, while one teen paint balled the house, the other two threw rocks, one of which shattered a glass door at the front of the house. The teens allegedly also placed the note - written with red and green crayons - in the victim's mailbox saying "That's for not decorating for Christmas."

At their arraignment the girls were ordered to stay away from the victim as a condition of their bail.

The three Duxbury High School sophomores have pleaded innocent to charges filed against them. A pre trial conference on charges is pending in Plymouth Juvenile Court.

They were charged with violation of the state's hate crime statute (intimidation and property damage), larceny, malicious damage of property over \$250, and possession of an unlicensed (paintball) air gun.

"There isn't a clearer case of bias motivation," Gilfix told the Clipper. "I can't speak to what other people think," she

said. "I can't argue why the legislature passed the law. I can only comment on the facts. The facts in this case give rise to violation of the civil rights act."

The Civil Rights complaint filed by the office she said is much more severe than a restraining order. "It is the only way to protect everyone else in Duxbury from similar conduct. There is danger that these girls may do it again," she said.

If the girls violate the injunction they could spend up to 2 1/2 years in state prison with a possible 10 years if they physically injure anyone.

Hodgdon said that the incident was not a hate crime with religious motives but a stupid childish prank and an example of poor judgment.

Hodgdon said the girls are good kids who are not troublemakers. He said the girls and the families involved have been going through a living hell.

"These girls were already under the imposed 'stay away' order. The A.G.'s action is superfluous and redundant," said Hodgdon.

Hodgdon said the other paintball incident was raised in court as a possible connection Monday but he said he believes Duxbury police know this was a separate incident not related to the other and have even questioned a suspect.

Hodgdon said there were many acts of vandalism and property damage reported over the holidays in town

Recently local police revealed information that another home owned by a Jewish resident in Duxbury was vandalized with a paint ball gun on December 2. They are investigating the incident and have made no connection of the incident to the three girls already facing charges.

Police reportedly went Dec. 3 to the house located on Delorenzo Drive and found pink chips of paint on the house. The incident remains under investigation.